

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 INR-05 CIAE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9584
AMCONSUL KARACHI NIACT IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY KABUL NIACT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 3142

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, AF, PK
SUBJ: PAK-AFGHAN RELATIONS

REF: KABUL 2141; STATE 80290

SUMMARY: WE GET SHARPLY DIFFERING VIEWS OF ALLEGED PAK-
AFGHAN FREIGHT SHIPMENT PROBLEM FROM PAKS AND AFGHANS HERE.
AFGHAN CHARGE CLAIMS PRESENT NON-AVAILABILITY OF
FREIGHT CARS IS ONLY THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT IN AN
ERRATIC AND INADEQUATE WAGON SUPPLY SITUATION THAT
FIRST DEVELOPED ABOUT TWO AND A HALF MONTHS AGO. HE
CHARGES THAT SHIPS CARRYING AFGHAN GOODS TO KARACHI
FOR ONWARD MOVEMENT TO KABUL HAD DIFFICULTY IN SECURING
BERTHS AND TELLS US THAT THERE IS NO QUESTION IN HIS
MIND BUT THAT PROBLEMS STEM FROM DETERIORATION OF PAK-
AFGHAN POLITICAL RELATIONS. MFA OFFICER STATES THAT
ALLOCATION OF WAGONS WAS REDUCED THREE OR FOUR
WEEKS AGO IN LIGHT PAST YSE, FUTURE NEEDS, AND AVAIL-
ABILITY AND THAT AFGHAN TRADE REP IN KARACHI HAD
ACCEPTED THIS. HE MAINTAINS THAT BERTHING
FACILITIES AT KARACHI ARE ALLOCATED ON FIRST-COME,
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FIRST-SERVED BASIS AND STOUTLY DENIES ANY POLITICAL

DISCRIMINATION WAS INVOLVED EITHER IN ALLOCATING RAILWAY CARS OR IN PROVISION OF BERTHING FACILITIES. END SUMMARY.

1. NOT UNEXPECTEDLY, ACCOUNTS WE HAVE RECEIVED HERE FROM AFGHAN CHARGE AND MFA ON TRANSIT OF GOODS TO AFGHANISTAN THROUGH PAKISTAN AND ON BERTHING FACILITIES AT KARACHI FOR SHIPS BEARING AFGHANISTAN-BOUND CARGO ARE QUITE DIFFERENT. CONSULATE GENERAL KARACHI WILL BE DEVELOPING FURTHER INFORMATION.

2. AFGHAN CHARGE D'AFFAIRES SHERZOY TOLD DCM THAT FOR THREE DAYS RUNNING PAKISTAN WESTERN RAILWAYS HAS FAILED TO SUPPLY EVEN A SINGLE FREIGHT CAR FOR THE MOVEMENT NORTH FROM KARACHI OF AFGHAN GOODS TRANSITING PAKISTAN. ACCORDING TO SHERZOY THE PRESENT NON-AVAILABILITY OF FREIGHT CARS IS ONLY THE LATEST DEVELOPMENT IN A MOST ERRATIC AND INADEQUATE WAGON SUPPLY SITUATION THAT FIRST DEVELOPED APPROXIMATELY TWO AND A HALF MONTHS AGO. UNDER PAK/AFGHAN TRANSIT AGREEMENT PAKISTAN WESTERN RAILWAYS COMMITTED TO SUPPLY SIXTY WAGONS A DAY BUT THE AVERAGE SUPPLY HAS OVER PAST TWO MONTHS APPROXIMATED ONLY FIFTEEN WAGONS A DAY WITH WAGON AVAILABILITY OCCASIONALLY DROPPING TO AS LOW AS THREE OR FOUR A DAY. THE OBLIGATION TO PROVIDE RAIL FACILITIES IS NOT DENIED BY GOP. FAILURE TO SUPPLY ATTRIBUTED TO "UNAVAILABILITY OF WAGONS".

3. SHERZOY SAID THE GROSS INADEQUACY OF RAIL FACILITIES IS ONLY ONE ASPECT OF AFGHAN TRANSIT DIFFICULTIES. HE SAID THAT SHIPS CARRYING AFGHAN GOODS TO KARACHI FOR ONWARD MOVEMENT TO KABUL HAVE HAD DIFFICULTY SECURING BERTHS. ONE SHIP WHICH CARRIED CARGO OF FERTILIZER AND OTHER AGRICULTURAL ITEMS WAS REQUIRED TO STAND OUT FOR TWENTY DAYS UNTIL IT WAS PERMITTED TO BERTH THREE DAYS AGO AND THIS ARRANGED ONLY AFTER HECTIC EFFORTS BY AFGHAN GOVERNMENT "THROUGH MANY CHANNELS". ACCORDING SHERZOY THE CHARGES WHICH AFGHAN GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE TO PAY BECAUSE OF THE SHIP'S FAILURE TO SECURE A BERTH FOR TWENTY DAYS AMOUNT TO TWO HUNDRED

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THOUSAND DOLLARS. SHIP HAS DISCHARGED ITS CARGO BUT GOODS STILL REMAIN IN KARACHI PORT ALONG WITH OTHER SHIPMENTS AWAITING MOVEMENT BY RAIL.

4. SHERZOY SAID THERE IS NO QUESTION IN HIS MIND BUT THAT THE DELAYS AND SHORTFALLS IN PROVISION OF RAIL WAGONS DUE TO UNHAPPY STATE OF RELATIONS BETWEEN HIS COUNTRY AND PAKISTAN. HE HAS BEEN EXPERIENCING GREAT

DIFFICULTY IN GETTING TO SEE FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS.
HIS EFFORTS TO SECURE APPOINTMENTS USUALLY MET WITH
RESPONSES THAT OFFICIAL IN QUESTION IS "NOT AVAILABLE".
HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY HAS DETERIORATED
TO THE POINT THAT HE HAS NOT BEEN ABLE IN THE PAST
THREE DAYS PERSONALLY TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS REGARDING
THE CUT-OFF OF FREIGHT CAR SUPPLY AND WAS FORCED TO
REGISTER HIS OBJECTIONS ONLY IN DIPLOMATIC NOTE DELIVERED
TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.

5. SHERZOY SAID THAT SINCE THE ASSASSINATION OF SHERPAO
ON FEBRUARY 8 AND THE RESULTING CANCELLATION OF THE
PLANNED AGHA SHAHI/WAHID ABDULLAH BILATERAL TALKS IN
KABUL THE STATE OF AFFAIRS BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND
AFGHANISTAN HAS DETERIORATED. HE SEES NO SHORT TERM
PROSPECT FOR THE RENEWAL OF EFFORTS TO GET BILATERAL
DISCUSSIONS GOING AGAIN AT ANY OFFICIAL LEVEL. AS TO
THE TRANSIT PROBLEMS, SHERZOY SAID THINGS LIKELY CONTINUE
AS THEY ARE WITH THE PAKS CONTINUING AT A GREATER OR
LESSER EXTENT TO WITHHOLD ADEQUATE TRANSIT FACILITIES
FROM THE AFGHANS AS PROVIDED FOR IN TRANSIT AGREE-
MENT. IT HAS COME TO POINT HE SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT
WILL NOW HAVE TO CONSIDER VERY SERIOUSLY WHETHER IT
SHOULD TRANSIT GOODS ACROSS IRAN ALTHOUGH THAT ROUTE
IS MORE TIME CONSUMING AND MORE COSTLY.

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ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 INR-05 CIAE-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 9585

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 ISLAMABAD 3142

LIMDIS

6. VERSION PROVIDED POL COUNSELOR BY MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL (AFGHANISTAN) MANSUR AHMED DIFFERS SHARPLY FROM AFGHAN ACCOUNT. ACCORDING AHMED, WHO NOTED THAT THE PAKISTAN CHARGE IN KABUL HAD BEEN CALLED IN BY THE AFGHANS ON THE ISSUE EARLIER THIS WEEK, PAKS HAD AGREED FOLLOWING DISRUPTION IN TRANSPORTATION CAUSED BY LAST SUMMER'S FLOODS TO PROVIDE 50-60 WAGONS PER DAY FOR TRANSIT OF GOODS BETWEEN KARACHI AND LANDI KOTAL WITH A VIEW TO MOVING GOODS WHICH HAD PILED UP IN KARACHI DURING FLOOD PERIOD. THESE HAD BEEN MADE AVAILABLE TO AFGHANS AS REQUIRED THOUGH NEED FREQUENTLY FELL BELOW THE 50-60 FIGURE. THREE TO FOUR WEEKS AGO, ACCORDING AHMED, KARACHI-BASED COMMITTEE WHICH DEALS WITH ALLOCATIONS OF WAGONS DECIDED THAT IN LIGHT PAST USE, FUTURE NEEDS, AND AVAILABILITY, ALLOCATION OF WAGONS FOR AFGHANISTAN TRADE WOULD THENCEFORTH BE REDUCED TO 20 PER DAY. AFGHAN TRADE REPRESENTATIVE IN KARACHI HAD BEEN WILLING TO ACCEPT THIS FIGURE THOUGH HE HAD SOME PROBLEMS WITH TYPE (I.E., COVERED VERSUS UNCOVERED) OF WAGONS WHICH PAKS WERE PREPARED TO SUPPLY. MATTER IS STILL BEING NEGOTIATED. AS FAR AS AHMED WAS AWARE, THE ALLOCATION OF 20 WAGONS HAD BEEN FULLY MET. HE
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SAID HE DID NOT KNOW OF ANY PILING UP OF GOODS FOR AFGHANISTAN AT KARACHI.

7. DISCUSSING BERTHING AT KARACHI HARBOR, AHMED SAID SHIPS WERE GIVEN FACILITIES ON A FIRST-COME, FIRST-SERVED BASIS. IF SHIPS BEARING CARGO FOR AFGHANISTAN HAD DIFFICULTY IN BERTHING IT WAS BECAUSE OF GENERAL CONGESTION. HE STOUTLY DENIED THAT POLITICAL DISCRIMINATION HAD BEEN INVOLVED EITHER IN ALLOCATING RAILWAY CARS OR IN PROVISION OF BERTHING FACILITIES.

8. FOR KARACHI: WE HAVE REPEATED KABUL 2141 TO YOU. SINCE TRAFFIC IN THIS SERIES HAS ALL BEEN IMMEDIATE, WE NOW BELIEVE IT BEST FOR YOU TO REPORT YOUR FINDINGS DIRECTLY TO THE DEPARTMENT, REPEATING TO KABUL AND INFO ADDRESSEES. PARTICULARLY CRITICAL IN YOUR ASSESSMENT WILL BE YOUR EVALUATION OF TRAFFIC PRESSURES RAILWAYS NOW FACE AND DEGREE OF CONGESTION AT PORT. IN LIGHT OF THE SENSITIVITY OF THE ISSUE AND OUR WISH NOT TO BECOME INVOLVED OR EVEN TO BE SUSPECTED OF INVOLVEMENT IN A MEDIATING ROLE, WE HOPE YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DEVELOP YOUR INFORMATION AS DISCREETLY AS POSSIBLE. GIVEN MANSUR AHMED'S COMMENT, MADE TO

POL COUNSELOR AFTER SCHAFFER/MCKEE TELCON, WE BLIEVE
IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR YOU TO BE IN TOUCH WITH AFGHAN
TRADE REP AS WELL AS WITH YOUR OTHER PAKISTAN CON-
TACTS.
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